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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [AJ](#)
SUBJECT: FORMER HEALTH MINISTER ALI INSANOV SENTENCED TO 11
YEARS FOR CORRUPTION

REF: A. BAKU 300

[1](#)B. BAKU 472

Classified By: DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION JASON P. HYLAND PER 1.4(B,D)

[1](#)1. (SBU) On April 20, the Baku Court of Grave Crimes found former GOAJ Health Minister Ali Insanov guilty of public corruption and sentenced him to 11 years in prison. In addition to Insanov, ten other defendants - all former Ministry of Health officials - were convicted and sent to prison on charges including abuse of power, misuse of state property, and corruption (see ref a). The widely expected verdict was covered by all major print and electronic media outlets.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Separately, on April 19, police in Sumgayit detained Rizvan Talibov, the head of Union of the Return to Western Azerbaijan, a group claiming to represent the clan from which Insanov originates. Reportedly Talibov was provoked into a scuffle on board a local bus in the city of Sumgayit (40 kilometers north of Baku). Police arrested Talibov on charges of "hooliganism." Commentators speculate that Talibov has been detained for recently announcing that his group would hold a rally with the opposition party Musavat, an agreement Musavat Deputy Chair Arif Hajili confirmed. However, the April 22 rally, which the group had planned to carry out in the historically significant Freedom Square, did not take place.

[1](#)3. (C) COMMENT: While the April 20 verdict made major headlines, all eyes are on the upcoming trial of detained former Minister of Economic Development Farhad Aliyev, slated to begin May 15. We seek the Department's guidance on press guidance proposed in ref b.
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